Older people's knowledge often a living centers of the third age about HIV/AIDS

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To assess the knowledge of elderly participants in the Living Center for Senior Citizens on HIV / AIDS.

Method: An exploratory and descriptive study with a qualitative approach, conducted through interviews with 17 elderly participants in the Living Center for Senior Citizens in Teresina-Pi. The data analysis allowed us to establish three categories: knowledge of elderly HIV / AIDS; methods used by the elderly in the prevention of HIV / AIDS and health education in the prevention of HIV / AIDS.

Results: The elderly hold little knowledge about HIV / AIDS, with an emphasis on prevention, transmission and susceptibility of contracting HIV at any stage of life. Few subjects reported on the use of an adequate method of prevention.

Conclusion: We emphasize the importance of Health Education as a strategy to improve the knowledge of the elderly population about important aspects of HIV / AIDS, mainly with regard to the myths related to the mode of transmission.

Descriptors: AIDS, Elderly, Prevention.

RESUMO


Descritores: AIDS, Idoso, Prevenção.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: Evaluar el conocimiento de los ancianos participantes en el Centro de Convivencia de la Tercera Edad acerca del VIH / SIDA. Método: Estudio exploratorio y descriptivo, con abordaje cualitativo, realizado a través de entrevistas con 17 ancianos de un Centro de Convivencia de la Tercera Edad en Teresina-Pi. El análisis de los datos permitió establecer tres categorías: conocimiento de los ancianos acerca del VIH / SIDA; los métodos utilizados por los ancianos en la prevención del VIH / SIDA y la educación en salud en la prevención del VIH / SIDA. Resultados: Los ancianos tienen poco conocimiento acerca del VIH / SIDA, con énfasis en la prevención, la transmisión y en la susceptibilidad de contraer el virus VIH en cualquier etapa de la vida. Pocos ancianos informaron sobre el uso de un método adecuado de prevención. Conclusión: Se resalta la importancia de la Educación en Salud como una estrategia para mejorar el conocimiento de la población de edad avanzada sobre aspectos importantes del VIH / SIDA, en particular en relación con los mitos relacionados con el modo de transmisión.

Descritores: SIDA, Anciano, Prevenção.
Older people's knowledge often a living...
prolong their sex life, which can be associated with
increased cases of Acquired Immunodeficiency
Syndrome (AIDS) in the elderly.⁶

There is evidence that AIDS has begun in
Africa and disseminated by the countries of
Europe, the United States and Haiti through the
migrations of peoples in these regions. Brazil was
not out of the script of this epidemic, and in the
Southeast its largest number of cases of the
disease, making it one of the major public health
problems today.

Were reported from 1980 to July 2007,
474,273 cases of AIDS in Brazil - 289 074 in the
Southeast, 89,250 in the South, the Northeast
53,089, 26,757 and 16,103 in the Midwest in the
North. In the South, Southeast and Midwest
regions, the incidence of this disease tends to
stabilize. In the North and Northeast, the trend is
increasing.⁷

Piauí was reported the first case of AIDS in
1987, diagnosed in 1986. From 1986 to 2006 were
reported in Piauí State 2,652 AIDS cases over 13
years of age, with a growing trend.⁸

The AIDS virus is transmitted during all
stages of infection, and the proportional hazards of
viremia, which occurs through sexual and
parenteral route, in which, if found in the blood,
semenal fluid, vaginal, secretions, amniotic fluid,
and breast milk infected persons, and sexual route
is more representative of the number of
transmissions of the virus. Regarding perinatal
spread of HIV can occur in utero, during birth or
breastfeeding.⁹

One of the ways to prevent HIV / AIDS is
through the elimination of risk behaviors such as
unprotected sex, sharing needles, transfusion of
unscreened blood. Some educational programs that
have been created are of great importance, as they
seek to spread information to people about the
disease and its prevention and make them aware of
the importance to take care to avoid disease
transmission.

INTRODUCTION

Aging is a process common to all living
beings, a phenomenon characterized by several
changes in humans, such as individual, family and
social changes. This is a natural follow-up of
progressive reduction in the functional reserve of
the people, in which, under normal conditions,
usually do not cause any problems, but under
overload conditions can cause pathological
conditions.¹

The process of aging is continuous and
starts from the beginning of the formation of
individual still in the womb. Growing old is not a
distant phenomenon, is something that is very
present today the demographic transition is
invincible process in which results from
physiological, psychological and social changes,
and some seniors are more aged, others appear
younger and there are still those who feel without
any use.²

Aging is assimilated with continuity, a
process that lasts a lifetime, difficult to define
with precision, complicated to say who is part or
not of the third age group, even by the very
acceptance of individual part of this group.³

Brazil follows the Elderly Statute, Law No.
10.741, of October 1, 2003, which states that
elderly individuals is the one who is aged 60 or
older, and still ensures against any physical harm
or moral, covering their fundamental rights in
pursuit of a better quality of life.⁴

The population of the elderly in Brazil has
been growing rapidly. It is estimated that in 2020
the population of people over 60 will be 30 million,
representing 13% of the population. This is the
result of better quality of life and reduction in
fertility rates and mortality.⁵

With the improvement in quality of life
through technological advances in medicine and in
health care in general, individuals above 60 years
of age are becoming more socially active, and
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With advances in medicine and in the pharmaceutical industry, from deeper knowledge of the behavior of HIV-infected persons was possible to produce anti-retroviral drugs for combined use, "cocktail", which displays efficiency in elevated lymphocyte count T CD4 + and decrease in plasma HIV RNA titles thereby reducing the progression of the disease, reduces the incidence of opportunistic complications increases survival and improve quality of life of those infected.¹⁰

Unfortunately, even with the advances in medicine, has not yet found a preventive HIV vaccine, points out that would be the primary tool currently to combat this epidemic, and is a breakthrough in the treatment of millions of individuals who have AIDS if therapeutic vaccine.¹¹

The epidemiological profile of the AIDS epidemic goes through changes due to the inclusion of new population groups infected with HIV, such as women, children, teens and seniors, featuring the heterosexualization and feminization, juvenization and internalizing pathology, in which, at the beginning of the epidemic AIDS, the disease remained in homosexuals, people who performed blood transfusions and drug users.¹²

Considering that HIV / AIDS is a major public health problem and the number of infected older people is increasing every year in Brazil, due to the association of population growth in this age group with pharmaceutical and medical innovations, which extends your sex life, it becomes important scientific production studies that bring clarification on this issue.

To reflect on HIV / AIDS in the elderly was elected as the object of this study: Knowledge of elderly participants in the Living Center for Senior Citizens on HIV / AIDS.¹³

This study is relevant for the current theme and will serve as theoretical background for conducting scientific research on the subject, directed specifically at students and / or health professionals interested in improving their knowledge on the subject.

Thus the following guiding question of this study has been: What knowledge of elderly participants in the Living Center for Senior Citizens on HIV / AIDS? And it has as objective to analyze the knowledge of elderly participants in the Living Center for Senior Citizens on HIV / AIDS.

**METHODOLOGY**

To fulfill the purposes, it was performed an exploratory and descriptive study with a qualitative approach. Exploratory research aims to provide greater familiarity with the problem, trying to make it more explicit or construct hypotheses for the purpose of improvement ideas or the discovery of intuition.⁵

In the descriptive research, the facts are observed, recorded, analyzed, classified and interpreted without the researcher to manipulate the phenomenon of the physical and human world studied and can identify characteristics of certain population or phenomenon.¹³

Qualitative research allows to easily describe the complexity of a given problem, understand and classify dynamic processes experienced by social groups, contributing to the change process, creation or formation of opinions of a given group and allow in greater level of depth, the interpretation the particularities of the behaviors or attitudes of individuals.¹⁴

This study was conducted in a Living Center for Senior Citizens (CCTI) in Teresina-PI, where are regularly offered various activities such as: biodanza, classes of forró, capoeira, choir, physical activities, among others, for elderly residents in the city of
Older people's knowledge often a living...
Knowledge of seniors about HIV / AIDS

AIDS is a pathology transmitted through sex, blood (parenteral and from mother to child during pregnancy, during childbirth or postpartum) and in breast milk, and having as risk factors multiple sexual partners without condom use, use of blood or blood derivatives without quality control, shared use of syringes and needles. The speeches of the elderly focus a bit this conception Aids:

It is a disease transmitted through sexual intercourse and blood [...] (Interview 16)

AIDS is caught by sex, manicure and injection needles [...] (Interview 5)

Regarding AIDS, is very vulnerable in the world, people swapping partners, unhygienic, [...], do not use condoms … (Interview 7)

The HIV virus is present in vaginal secretions, semen, blood, amniotic fluid and breast milk, so it needs contact with these materials to occur transmission of the virus, which does not occur through kissing on the face and mouth, hug, handshake. The following statements show the opposite thought to that knowledge:

[...] You caught if you don’t have hygiene, do not wash well your hands [...] (Interview 4)

[...] kissing randomly where they walk around […] (Interview 7)

There are seniors who still have mistaken thoughts in relation to transmission of HIV / AIDS, which can be observed in previous statement, and including, in other recent studies. Not yet managed a healing treatment for AIDS, but through advances in knowledge of the pathogenesis of HIV infection, it was possible to
Oliveira ADS, Rodrigues LMC, Silva MNP et al. produce a cocktail of drugs to control the disease and reduce the incidence of opportunistic complications. Some participants portray this knowledge, observed as follows:

[...] AIDS is a disease that has no cure, but the person may have a longer life through treatment, if performed at the beginning [...] (Interview 15)

The main means of transmitting the HIV / AIDS is through unprotected sex, an activity that is not exclusively practiced by the young and the elderly are increasingly gaining their freedom in this sense, a result attributed to improved quality of life and advances in healthcare. Therefore, any person practicing unprotected sex may be subject to contracting HIV / AIDS. Most participants showed that knowledge, demonstrated in the following statements:

[...] Male or female, if does sexual intercourse, can get AIDS, regardless of age [...] (Interview 15)

I think many young and women who you see around, are easier to get AIDS, but today it is everywhere, old people too [...] is worldwide. (Interview 8)

The number of sexual relations between people over 50 years has increased due to the emergence of medication that improves sexual activity. Associated to this, unprotected sex, lack of knowledge of the society about the growing number of cases of elderly HIV-infected and active participation of individuals in this age group, in social life contributes to the increased incidence of AIDS in older people, threatening public health.17

As the speeches show, it is noticed that most of the elderly have some knowledge in relation to transmission, prevention, treatment of HIV / AIDS and / or susceptible people, but there are still those who show not have adequate knowledge about the disease, primarily with regard to transmission.

Methods used by the elderly in the prevention of HIV / AIDS

The multiplicity of sexual partners without condom use, use of blood or blood derivatives without quality control (nearly banned in Brazil), the sharing of syringes and needles are not sterilized sharps injuries without the use of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment ), pregnancy in HIV-infected women and receiving organs or semen of infected donors are risk factors that are related to the transmission of HIV / AIDS. The following statements show that some older people are protecting themselves adequately against the spread of HIV:

I always avoid relationships with many people, this is to avoid different numbers of sex partners, fewer partners as less risk of catching the AIDS (Interview 16)

My husband and I, we preserves ourselves using condoms (Interview 7)

Forewarn me with condoms in relationships with people (Interview 6)

Thus, it can be observed that even the majority of elderly showing knowledge about the main form of prevention against HIV / AIDS, only two confirmed condom use in their sexual relationships, thereby promoting increased risk of transmission of this pathology in people of this age, needing, so greater attention from public policy, with regard to this issue.

Health education in the prevention of HIV/AIDS
The health education it is a way to generate and apply the knowledge in the search of the good human development being a tool of emancipation, in which provides fortification of the taken of autonomous decision of the individuals. One of the forms to develop health education is through of educational lectures, like observed in the following statement:

[…] here at the Living Center of Elderly, we always receive lectures about AIDS, then we get enlightened. (Interview 7)

Currently, the information and the media are essential. The television is the product more influent in the way of thinking and in the behavior of the Brazilian citizens, what can be show in the following statement:

[…] I heard about AIDS by the television, with this we can be informed about everything. (Interview 13)

In television I saw what people need to do to avoid AIDS. (Interview 16)

It can be highlight the importance of Health Education to the development of the critic conscience of the population about their health issues, as a stimulating strategy in the search of solution and organization to a collective action.

CONCLUSION

Aging is a continous process, which results in physiologic, psychological and social alterations, aiming the improvement the quality of life of people by mean of the technological advances in medication and in the area of general health.

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